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ABSTRACT

Conducted in 1979 to discover the extent of library use by Racine area residents, to determine their awareness of library services available, and to form conclusions and recommendations to help increase neighborhood use of the branch library, this study randomly sampled 179 residences using a questionnaire composed of 25 questions. The survey, in addition to providing a population breakdown, found that 73 percent of those interviewed had used the library in the previous year, 65 percent at least once during the year, and 35 percent at least once per month. Most respondents said they used the library to borrow materials, ask for information on a specific topic, or use the copy machine. Only nine percent of the respondents were aware that all of the services mentioned in the questionnaire were available at the Racine Public Library, and over 50 percent were unaware that the library offered services to the handicapped. In addition to a description of the survey method and an analysis of the data gathered, this report contains conclusions and recommendations, a sample questionnaire, a map of Racine wards and districts, relevant letters, and a list of background readings. (FM)

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CITIZEN AWARENESS AND USE OF RACINE PUBLIC LIBRARY FACILITIES PILOT STUDY - DISTRICT 10, WARD 1

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June 15, 1979

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

Preface. 1-6

Introduction. 7-14

Circulation Study. 7

Purpose of Survey. 10

Area to be Surveyed. 11

The Survey Method. 15-17

Describing the Parameters. 15

Public Relations Ground Work. 15

Sample Size and Type. 16

The Survey Questions. 17

Survey Analysis. 18-29

Definiton of Terms. 18

Statistical Definition of Survey Population. 18

Age, Race, Sex Characteristics. 18

Length of Residence in Racine. 19

Educational Level. 20

Convenience of Library Service. 20

R.P.L. Facility Used. 20

Accessibility of Library Services. 21

Mode of Transportation Used to the Library. 21

Distance from the Library. 22

Awareness of Right to Library Services 22

Use of Library Facilities Other Than R.P.L. 23

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TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Use of Racine Public Library Facilities. 24-29

Number of Card Holders. 24

Ages of Card Holders. 25

Frequency of Use. 25

Type of Use. 26

Total Use of R.P.L. Facilities. 27

Which Services Should R.P.L. Provide. 28

Awareness of Services Available at R.P.L. 28

Requests for Additional Services. 29

Summary. 30

Conclusions and Recommendations. 32

Appendix

The Survey Questionnaire (Responses Received)

Letter of Cooperation - Racine Public Library

Letter of Introduction - Frank A. Barry, Alderman, District 10

Map of Wards and Districts, Racine, Wisconsin

Footnotes

Background Readings

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A project of this scope can seem overwhelming but with the aid and guidance of so many colleagues and friends it became a joy to do and a labor of love.

I would especially like to thank Mr. Jack LeSuer, City Librarian of Racine, Wisconsin, for the inspiration his dynamic brand of librarianship provides and for the trust he placed in me by allowing me to act as a spokesperson for the Racine Public Library while conducting this survey.

Dr. Kim Baugrud, Director of Extension Services, U.W. - Parkside, a longtime friend and mentor, provided me with the practical know-how to implement the survey and gave me direction in analyzing the actual results.

Background information on the branch library and on surveys conducted by the Racine Public Library in the past was generously provided by my respected supervisor, Miss Gertrude Morgan, Head of Extension Services for the Racine Public Library.

Mrs. Judy Day, Branch Librarian in the district where the survey was conducted, deserves special thanks for her constant encouragement. Mrs. Day and the Uptown Branch staff volunteered their free time to help me prepare the mailings to area residents- an enormous task that could only have been done by such a group effort. Thank you Daisy, Judy, Mae, Meta, and Sue.

Alderman Frank Barry, District 10, Ward 1, a longtime supporter of public library services, was very kind in enlisting the cooperation of his constituents. As a result, the survey received a high level of response from residents of Ward 1.

My academic supervisor, Dr. Ronald Sigler, has provided invaluable guidance to the literature of our profession regarding user and non-user studies. His subtle direction has allowed me to gain confidence in my creative ability. The time and personal interest he has devoted to this project is greatly appreciated.

PREFACE

My interest in the Uptown Branch Library (situated in the ward which is the subject of this study) began about 13 years ago, in 1966, when I was first hired as a library assistant by the Racine Public Library. The Branch was undergoing a period of transition. A trend of declining circulation from 1963-1968 had caused a drop of almost 50% in the average hourly circulation in the Children's Department of the Branch. Adult circulation had remained almost constant during this same period in spite of "decided changes in the surrounding neighborhood". The City Librarian concluded that the "bread and butter" usage of the Branch came from outside the neighborhood[1] and seemed to indicate that this was the clientele the Branch was to pursue when he posed the following questions to department heads and the Branch Librarian:

> "How can this kind of usage be encouraged (i.e. usage by adults with, I assume, heavy emphasis on married women, housewives)? Can the adult service be made more 'inviting' by any changes in book selection, atmosphere - more emphasis on informal, 'neighborly' conduct of business, etc. What is Uptown's proper role? A junior-sized Main Library, or a place where people - staff and public - who enjoy reading can share their interests and enthusiasms?"[2]

The evaporation of the neighborhood patron base seemed to be regarded as a "fait accompli".

Local and Federal legislation during this time period had combined to undercut the patron base of the Branch. Prior to the 1960's, the public library system in Racine had operated branch libraries in many of the local schools.[3] In the early 1960's area voters decided to form a Unified School District (combining Racine City Schools and the rural school districts east to I-94) funded by a tax separate from other city services and the cooperative public library/ city school branches were dissolved. Federal legislation - The Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 - authorized $100 million to be spent by the states for school library resources.[4] Consequently, school libraries were eventually established in all Racine schools by the end of the decade. The base for a significant portion of the Uptown Branch Library's service had been eroded. School classroom visits to the library and large collections of books loaned to teachers had formed a substantial part of library circulation.

Major changes in the physical aspects of the area occurred during this period also. In 1967-69 many neighborhood homes were removed or demolished and a major throughway connecting the north and south sides of Racine was constructed. The Uptown Branch survived, however, and is situated on an isthmus of land which had been part of a neighborhood block. The traffic pattern to the library was significantly complicated. The library can be directly approached by vehicle only from the East or West and the streets providing access to the library are heavily trafficked.

To further compound the changes to the Branch neighborhood, the local elementary school (which had attracted children to the area) was demolished in the early 1970's. In addition, the adjacent business district was also undergoing significant changes - several stores which had drawn customers to the Uptown for years had pulled out from the community. (The business district is presently the subject of an intensive revitalization program).

During the aforementioned time period the number of patrons using the library who lived outside the immediate Branch area was growing. The use by neighborhood residents was decreasing and an increasing percentage of patronage was derived from all other parts of the City and County.[5] The library was changing from a neighborhood branch to one offering city-wide service in an increasing amount. The drop in circulation, attributable to neighborhood changes, was understandable to library staff and perhaps even regarded as inevitable.

A new City Librarian, Mr. Jack LeSuer, was appointed in the Spring of 1977. He called on the staff to pursue an increased awareness of service to the public. His appointment of a new branch librarian, an enlarged staff, and other significant changes in Branch operations, indicated that he challenged the idea that circulation drop and less neighborhood usage should be regarded as acceptable. I questioned Mr. LeSuer specifically on these aspects: "Why did you feel the Branch had potential? Why did you not accept the attitude of your predecessor that the drop in usage was acceptable and/or inevitable due to circumstances?"

Mr. LeSuer indicated that he felt a class rationale had been used to justify the decrease in neighborhood use of the library. The rationale which had been used claimed that a lower-class population, classically non-supportive of libraries, had now occupied the neighborhood. Mr. LeSuer felt that if the Branch would cater to the needs of the neighborhood - whatever the social class - that the usage would improve. He felt that a change of staff would be the first vital step in that direction. A new staff would approach the Branch with no preconceptions about the area - no preconceptions of what would be possible or impossible in regard to library service to the neighborhood.

Mrs. Judy Day was appointed Branch Librarian in June of 1978. She stated that one of her major goals was to make the library an integral part of the Uptown area - by patronizing neighborhood businesses, utilizing local resource people, encouraging area groups to present programs, etc. The second major goal was to tailor the library collection to the needs of area patrons.

Therein was the dilema. How does one tailor a collection to the needs of a neighborhood? How does one determine what those needs are? Librarians usually have to rely on their professional intuition to do this. But this is often difficult, especially in an area that is not familiar to the librarian.

The new Guidelines for Public Library Service issued in final draft form in December, 1978 by the American Library Association, Public Library Association, Goals, Guidelines and Standards Committee calls for this type of service to the needs of the community.

"The committee determined that it was time for the profession to turn library standards around and start with the needs of communities and individuals rather than with needs of an institution."[6]

The Goals, Guidelines and Standards Committee recommended that the Public Library Association develop a process which any public library or public library system could use to set its own standards, to plan and evaluate service programs appropriate to the needs of a specific community.[7] To aid in this, the American Library Association has commissioned Vernon Palmour and King Research, Inc. of Rockville, Maryland to develop and test such a planning process. The planning methodology was prepared from October 1, 1977 - June 30, 1978 and the testing of it is to be completed by June 30, 1979. Subsequently, the developed methodology is to be applied to public libraries in a variety of situations and a package prepared to be distributed to any public library or system that would like to use this type of method to determine the character of its service area and needs of its patrons.[8]

A study of this type has been developed for specific application to Baltimore County Public Libraries by Mr. Palmour and Marcia C. Bellassai for the Public Research Institute, a division of the Center for Naval Analysis. The study was funded by a grant from the Division of Library Development and Services, Maryland State Department of Education. It was viewed as the first step in a planning process that would allow assessment of goals, priorities, and policies on a continuous basis.[9]

The Uptown Branch Library appeared to be the perfect subject for such a study. I decided to emulate some aspects of Mr. Palmour's research and immediately began preparations for my quixotic door-to-door quest.

INTRODUCTION

Circulation Study as Basis of Need for the Survey

A new librarian had been appointed at the Uptown Branch Library and vigorous efforts were being made to increase the responsiveness of Branch services to the neighborhood. Previous librarians had set service to those who bothered to use the library as their top priority. Pragmatically, it makes sense to spend staff time and funds on materials and programs to please people who would make use of them. But is this fulfilling the library's responsibility to the entire community?

All previous surveys conducted by or for the Racine Public Library have been concerned with the characteristics of library users and their degree of satisfaction with library services. None have been concerned with non-users or their reasons for not using the library.

Two studies conducted in 1964 and 1971 were concerned with "Where patrons of the Uptown Branch live". These studies indicated that the percentage of Branch Library patrons from the local neighborhood was continually decreasing.[10] I requested of the new Branch Librarian that I be allowed to conduct a study of present circulation patterns to determine if the trend of decreasing neighborhood use was continuing and to what extent.

January 12, 1979 - January 26, 1979 was the time period used to study the circulation pattern of the Branch. Daily analysis of circulation records was required. Each day the

address and zip code of every individual patron (juvenile and adult) was recorded. No attention was given to which books were circulated or how many since the study was only concerned with area of residence of Branch patrons. Each new number that appeared was recorded on a separate index card and repeat visits by the same patron during the specified time period were noted on the card. Once again, because only area of residency was of concern, the number of visits was not vital. However, I did need to make note of repeat visits so that the total number of individual patrons using the library during this period would be accurately reported. This study made no attempt to determine the address of library patrons who did not check out materials (i.e. people who used materials in the library, telephoned for information, attended library programs, etc.).

A total of 348 individual patrons were identified during the study. Analysis by area of residence indicated that 31 patrons (8.9%) lived in the Ward where the library is located. This would seem to be a very small percentage, especially when compared to the fact that 13% of the patrons came from Racine County areas to the north, far west, and south - a much greater distance. A glance at the illustration on page 9 will show the pattern of Branch usage at the time of the study. No direct comparisons can be made with the 1964 and 1971 Racine Public Library studies because the time period involved and the method of analysis differ to some degree. However, the study does verify that the majority of Branch Library users does not come from the immediate Branch area - a trend that has continued since the 1964 study.

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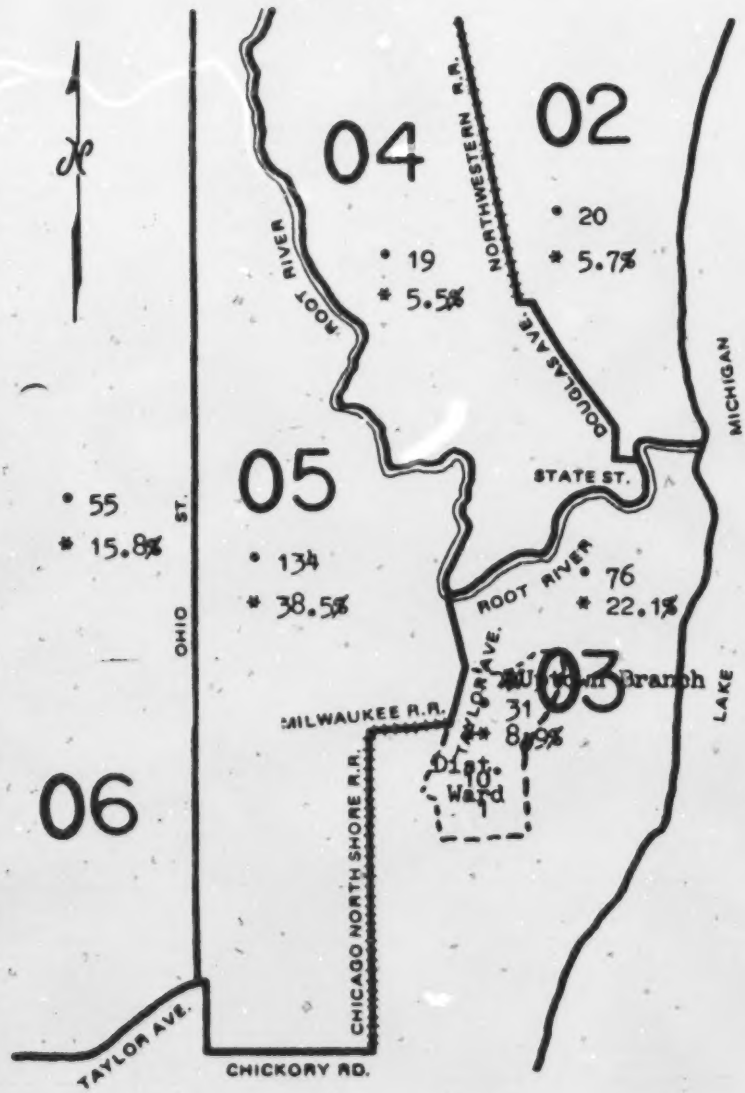
LOCAL ZONES
RACINE, WISC.
534 + TWO DIGITS SHOWN = ZIP CODE

Zip Code Areas 53182
53126
53177



CIRCULATION STUDY

UPTOWN BRANCH LIBRARY

January 12, 1979 - January 26, 1979

Usage Pattern (by Zip Code Zone)

• Number of patrons

* % of total patronage

Total number of patrons = 348

On the surface, these figures would seem to indicate that the Branch has ceased to function as a branch library by traditional definition. (A Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission study on public library systems defines a branch library as one serving a total population of 25,000 - 50,000 and located within a 15-minute one-way travel time by automobile or mass transportation for the total population served.)[11] Branch libraries are generally located in an area somewhat remote from a Main Library. Proximity is one of the major appeals of branch library use and when Uptown was built in 1914[12] no doubt the 1.5 miles separating it from the Main Library seemed a much greater distance. A review of the current pattern of usage by Branch patrons (page 9) will reveal that the Branch now serves the entire city to some degree - a total population of more than 100,000 and, for some patrons, considerably more than 15 minutes distant by motor vehicle.

In comparison to total library use, the 8.9% of Branch patrons living in Ward 1 suggests that citizens living in the Ward make minimal use of library services in Racine. But is this a valid conclusion? And if the conclusion is valid, what are the reasons they don't use the library?

Purpose of a Survey

A door-to-door survey of area residents was planned to determine the extent of citizen use and awareness of Racine Public Library services in the above Ward. The information

gained would provide possible answers to these concerns: 1) How much use is made of library services by residents of the area and what services do they use? 2) What is the level of awareness of the many services offered by the Racine Public Library?

The level of use revealed by the survey would be the base on which to build increased use. Any lack of awareness of services would indicate one possible direction for increasing use of the library - increased publicity informing the public about their right to library service and about the extent of service available at the library.

The door-to-door survey method was chosen because it gave the best opportunity for maximum response to the survey questions (no need for the interviewee to return the questionnaire by mail) and the best opportunity for questions and feedback from the interviewee about library services. If the interviewer is a librarian or representative knowledgable about the library, questions from the interviewee about library services or problems can be answered on the spot. The survey "advertises" the services of the library at the same time that it seeks to determine the characteristics and needs of the area. It is also an apropos time to distribute information brochures about library services.

The Area to be Surveyed

District 10, Ward 1 was selected to be the target of this study because it is the ward in which the Branch is located. The ward is convenient as a basic unit of study because it is

a predefined political entity - its parameters are spelled out in the directory of polling places issued by the City Clerk - and the alderman of the ward can serve as liaison between the library and his constituents. He can also be an invaluable source of information on the social makeup of the area. He is often the first one to hear about any needs or problems of the residents.

I conducted an interview with Frank A. Barry, Alderman of District 10, Ward 1 to get some background information on the area to be surveyed. Mr. Barry felt his district - Ward 1 and Ward 2 - really had two distinct profiles. Ward 1, the area of District 10 in which the Branch is located, was described as being very industrialized. He estimated that about one-half of the land area was covered by industry. The population of the Ward was viewed as low income for the most part (many on welfare) and many residents living in rented facilities with absentee landlords sometimes a problem.

Mr. Barry felt that lack of awareness about library facilities was a major reason for lack of use. Another possible problem he cited was the fear of authorities he sensed that some of his constituents experienced and the malaise they felt around people of a different background or social class. These problems could also prevent library use.

Goals for improved library service that Mr. Barry would like to see included increased use of the library by industry.

He is also in complete accord with the Branch goal of increasing library use by area residents. He expressed the belief that the library is an invaluable "free" educational resource that low income people can use to elevate their employment opportunities and thus become more self-sufficient.

The description of the area set forth by the most recent Community Analysis prepared by the City of Racine corresponds with Mr. Barry's assessments of the neighborhood. The analysis, based on 1970 Census statistics, cites several trends that are significant for application to library service goals. The area shows a significant decrease in white population and an increase in non-white population in the Ward - particularly in the area between DeKoven Street and Washington Avenue. There was a net decrease of population between 1960 and 1970 in this area due to a number of factors, not the least of which is a reduction in the amount of housing available[13] the housing being removed from the area generally not being replaced by homes, but by non-residential uses.

The analysis confirms that approximately one-half of the land area is covered by industrial firms, office buildings, warehouses, etc.. A significant portion (about 8%) of the land is devoted to commercial uses also. Also cited is the fact that the area immediately surrounding the Branch is part of the census tract in which the highest percentage (20.6%) of the City's welfare recipients reside.

The Community Analysis concludes that Census Tract 5 (the area from 17th Street north to the Branch is part of this tract) along with several other tracts "... have heavy concentrations of problems to such an extent that government assisted programs will have to be used if these areas are ever to regain former status as desirable places to live or become economically stable with the ability to pay for their proportion of community services."[14]

THE SURVEY METHOD

Describing the Parameters

The actual parameters of the ward to be studied were determined by the use of the City Directory of Racine, Wisconsin and the polling directory issued by the City Clerk entitled Location of Districts and Polling Places by Streets, Racine, Wisconsin. The polling directory gives complete information on the streets and street numbers included within the boundaries of the ward. This information is then used to look up specific addresses of ward residents in the City Directory. Only addresses of personal residences were of interest for this survey but the City Directory is also a convenient source for identification of industrial firms, businesses, and social organizations in the area.

A count of the individual residences listed in the Directory yielded 1016 currently occupied homes. The number of residences on each individual street was also noted. This information is necessary in order to assure that an equal sample (equal % of number of homes) would be secured from each street surveyed.

Public Relations Ground Work

In order to assure a maximum response to the survey, a great deal of public relations ground work had to be undertaken. The first step was to secure a letter of permission and cooperation from the Racine Public Library. A letter of introduction to residents of the Ward was obtained from Alderman Frank Barry, also,

and permission obtained to duplicate the letter and distribute copies to his constituents. (Copies of these letters are included in the Appendix.)

The letter of introduction to the citizens of Ward 1 served a four-fold purpose. It was a public relations tool for the library focusing citizen attention (however briefly) on library services. It also informed the citizens about the forthcoming survey and assured them of its authenticity, thus encouraging cooperation. The letter also identified the interviewer and defined the purpose of the study. Judging from the high degree of response elicited by the survey, this technique is very helpful.

The local Chamber of Commerce was notified concerning the purpose of the survey, the dates when it would be conducted, and the identity of the interviewer. Citizens wary of a stranger knocking at the door could thus readily verify the legitimacy of the survey.

Alderman Barry announced the forthcoming survey to the City Council and a brief mention of it subsequently appeared in the local newspaper. This was also helpful in informing the public about the survey.

Determination of Sample Size and Type

The goal of the survey was to receive a response regarding library use that was representative of the entire ward. In order to achieve this, responses had to be solicited in a random manner - a method assuring that every resident of the Ward had an equal

probability of being questioned. A minumum target of responses from 15% - 20% of the residences on any given street was established. The survey was done at times which would allow the greatest possibility of reaching all age groups, those employed on different time shifts, etc. Weekdays, 11-6 and Sundays, 12-6 were the times used. The survey was conducted during a two week period - March 15 through March 31, 1979. To the extent I was able to achieve a random sample, the results of this survey can be projected to apply to the entire Ward.

The Survey Questionnaire

Actual questions on the survey were patterned after a portion of a study prepared by Vernon E. Palmour and conducted for Baltimore County Public Libraries.[15] The survey specifically concerns citizen use and awareness of Racine Public Library facilities. Sections of the Baltimore County study were altered and questions added to fit the information needs of our particular library as determined by the questionning of professional library staff of the Racine Public Library. A copy of the survey questionnaire and the number and type of responses received to each question is included in the Appendix at the end of this report.

SURVEY ANALYSIS

Definition of Terms

Library - The term library, when mentioned in this survey refers to one of the Racine Public Library facilities (Main, Uptown Branch, Mobile, or Bookmobile) unless specifically noted otherwise.

Use - The term "use" in reference to library services in this survey means utilizing any Racine Public Library service (programs, copy machines, meeting rooms, browsing materials - newspapers and magazines that don't circulate, etc.) not just the borrowing of circulating material.

Statistical Definition of the Survey Population

Total number of residences in District 10, Ward 1 (as identified in the most current City Directory)	- 1016
Number of letters of notification returned (marked undeliverable by U.S. Postal Service indicating property not presently occupied)	- 15
Total number of residential units presently occupied	- 1001 **
Number of completed survey responses	- 179
Percentage of Ward 1 residences surveyed	- 17.9%*

Age, Race, and Sex Characteristics of Survey Respondents

(Questions 21,22,23)

Interviews were conducted with respondents 12 years of age and older. Out of the group of 179 respondents, 31% were over 60 years of age. (13% of the total population in Racine County is estimated to be over 60.)[16] Respondents were predominantly female (69%). The non-white response group represented 15.6%

of the total group. The City Analysis prepared by the Racine City Plan Commission and based on the 1970 United States Census shows Racine with an 11% non-white population (10,495 non-white/95,162 total population).[17] The following table illustrates exact make-up of the group by age, sex, and race.

AGE, RACE, AND SEX CHARACTERISTICS

	White		Black		Spanish	
Age	M	F	M	F	M	F
12-19	2	4	1	3		
20-29	12	24	3	3	1	
30-39	2	19	1	2		
40-49	5	11		4	1	3
50-59	6	12	3	2		
60-69	7	14				
70-79	8	17			1	
80-89	2	5				
90-99		1				
Totals	44	107	8	14	3	3

Length of Residence

(Question 25)

161 respondents out of the 179 replied that they had lived in Racine for more than 10 years. No one interviewed had lived in Racine less than 2 years. 40% of those replying had been lifetime residents of Racine.

Educational Level of Respondents

(Question 24)

Out of a total response of 177 (2 refused to answer this question) 57.5% (103) had a 12th grade education or more. 7 college graduates and 3 graduate students were represented in the sample. 74 respondents had less than a 12th grade education - 43 of these less than the 9th grade level.

Convenience of Library Services

(Question 1)

The great majority of respondents felt that the library provided a convenient location. 159 answered yes when asked that question. That is 88% of the total group. (The Branch Library and 1 Bookmobile stop - 21st and Taylor - are located within the parameters of the Ward.)

Location of Racine Public Library Facility Used

(Question 2)

116 people interviewed used a Racine Public Library facility with some regularity (at least once a year and up to once a week or more). Of this group 52 regularly used the Main Library; 45 the Uptown Branch; 10 the Bookmobile; 8 used several R.P.L. locations; and 1 regularly used the Senior Citizen Center book deposit at Gethsemane Church.

Accessibility of Library Services

(Questions 3,4)

Most respondents (150 out of 179) felt that nothing was preventing their use of the library. If they wanted to use the library they would be able to do so - hours, distance, transportation, etc. were not seen as a problem preventing library use.

29 of those interviewed did feel that they were hampered somewhat from using the library. A variety of reasons was cited. Lack of transportation was the reason cited most often (10). Next in frequency (8) was the comment that hours were a problem - 4 people felt that the Children's Department should be open every evening; 2 requested more Sunday hours; 2 wanted more summer hours during the day at the Uptown Branch. The 11 remaining comments included 6 about parking problems at the various locations, physical disabilities that prevented library use (2), and 3 miscellaneous reasons.

Mode of Transportation Used by Library Patrons

(Question 6)

Of those respondents who used the library (116), most (82) drive to the library in a private vehicle. 27 of the respondents walk to the library (17 of these walkers use the Uptown Branch). And 7 respondents regularly use bus transportation to get to the library.

Distance from Library Service in Minutes

(Question 7)

93% (109/116) of the interviewees who used the library indicated they could reach the service they used in 15 minutes or less. Variables involved in time of travel would be the form of transportation used, traffic intensity, time to find parking, which Racine Public Library service they used, and the distance of the R.P.L. location from their residence. All these factors considered, the majority felt that library service was within 15 minutes from home under normal conditions of the above variables.

Awareness of Right to Library Service and Cost of Library Service

(Questions 17,18)

141 respondents of the total 179 (79%) felt that any resident of the County regardless of age should be entitled to a library card and use of the library. (This question seemed to be somewhat ambiguous - respondents were unsure whether the interviewer wanted to know their personal feelings on the question or what the current administrative ruling on the subject happened to be. The question should be worded more precisely for any future study.)

There appeared to be a substantial degree of confusion in regard to the cost of a library card. 51% (92) of those interviewed were unsure of the cost of a library card. 49% knew that there was no initial cost for a library card.

Use of Library Facilities Other Than Those Furnished by R.P.L.

(Questions 8,9,10)

Questions 8, 9, and 10 referred to family use of library services other than those furnished by Racine Public Library. When asked if they ever used any library other than an R.P.L. facility, 137 of the 179 responded "no" - of these 137, 55 never used any library; 82 did use R.P.L.. 42 people responded "yes", they did use library facilities other than R.P.L.. Of these 42, 34 also use R.P.L.; 8 use other library facilities exclusively.

31% (55) of the respondents never use any library
19% (34) use R.P.L. as well as other library facilities
4% (8) use other library facilities exclusively
46% (82) use R.P.L. facilities exclusively

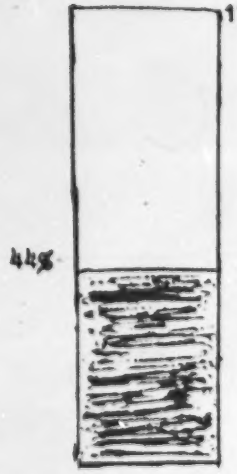
The other type of library used most frequently was the school library (22). Children in the family use the school library because of the convenience and because class time is scheduled for library use. 19 respondents indicated that they used a college library because it was more convenient since they were students at the college and because the college library provided more in-depth research materials. 2 indicated that they use public libraries in another city and 1 used a church library exclusively.

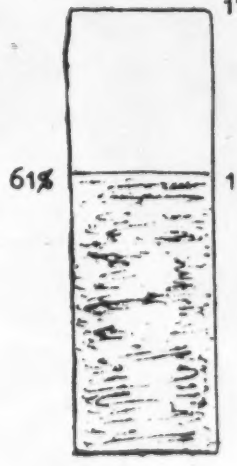
Use of Racine Public Library Facilities

(Questions 11,12) - Number of Card Holders

Two questions were asked concerning possession of a library card. In question 11 the respondent was asked if he or she had an R.P.L. card - 79(44%) answered that they did; 100(56%) did not. Question 12 concerned how many (if any) of the respondent's family members had library cards. 143 individual family members were identified as having library cards - these are in addition to the 79 respondents who had cards.

A comparison was made between questions 11 and 12. A tally was made noting all those households in which the primary respondent to the survey had indicated he did not have a library - 100 had indicated they did not. Of these 100 households, 30 of them did have other family members who possessed library cards. This means that a total of 109 households out of the 179 queried had at least one family member who possessed a library card to use the Racine Public Library. This represents 61% of the households which responded to the survey.




179 - total number of households reflected in the survey
61%
109 - number of households with at least one member having an R.P.L. card

AGE OF RACINE PUBLIC LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS
(WARD 1)

Age		Number
0 - 19	——	98
20 - 29	——	40
30 - 39	——	26
40 - 49	——	19
50 - 59	——	16
60 - 69	——	10
70 - 79	——	13
80 - 89	——	0
90 - 99	——	0
		222 Total

The 222 total reflected in the chart to the left represents the number of respondents (79) and family members (143) identified as having R.P.L. cards. The overwhelming majority of card holders are 39 years of age or younger. One can see the progressive diminution in the number of card holders as the age scale progresses upward.

(Question 5)-Frequency of Use

Question 5 concerned frequency of use of R.P.L. facilities. 116 (65%) of the 179 respondents indicated that they used the library with a frequency varying from once a week to once a year. 63 (35%) indicated that they never use the library.

12% (21) of total responding (179) used the library on a weekly basis.

12% (21) of total responding (179) use it once or twice a year.

35% (63) of total responding (179) use it at least once a month.

(Questions 13,14,15,16) - Type of Use

When asked the reason for their last visit to the library, 68 stated that they had not visited at all in the last year. This was compared to the 63 persons in Question 5 who indicated that they did not use the library at all. Apparently, the discrepancy of 5 individuals is attributable to a reluctance by these 5 to state they never use the library even though they have not visited at all in the last year. The three reasons for a visit to the library cited most often were the following:

Borrow materials for self	-	52
Ask information on a specific topic	-	27
Make copies	-	15

58 (52%) of the 111 persons who visited the library during the past year came to check out materials - 52 to check out materials for themselves, 6 to check out materials for a family member. 53 (48%) of those who visited the library did so for other reasons.

The telephone information service (Question 16) seems to be the single most popular service of the library with this particular segment of the population. 49% (88/179) of the total group responding to the survey has made use of the telephone information service at some time. Frequency of use for this service was not determined by this survey.

A complete table for the above section is included on the survey tally sheet in the Appendix.

(Questions 5,13,14,15,16) - Total Use of R.P.L. Facilities

A comparison of the answers to questions 5, 13, 14, 15, and 16 was made to reveal all possible aspects of library use reflected by this survey. The questionnaires of those individuals who had stated in Question 5 that they never used the library were double-checked for any single indication of use of a library service. Questions 13, 14, 15, 16 concern these uses.

Of these 63 "non-users", 11 indicated that they call the library for information; 3 other individuals of this group stated that a family member borrows books from the Racine Public Library for them to use; and 1 indicated that she used the books deposited by R.P.L. at a Senior Citizen Center. This makes the actual percentage of respondents who make use of some form of R.P.L. service an impressive 73% of the 179 surveyed. (116 who indicated they used the library in Question 5 + the 15 users revealed by the above analysis.)

(Question 19 A) - What Services Should R.P.L. Provide?

Citizens interviewed were asked a two part question about library services. Part A concerned which services the library should offer in the opinion of the interviewee. The respondents generally favored the library offering all the mentioned services. Unanimous support was expressed for the lending of books (a); and almost unanimous support for children's reading material (g), information service by telephone (i), and personalized help in answering questions on a specific topic (m). The least popular of all services mentioned was lending of framed pictures (h). Only 76 of the 179 (43%) felt we should offer this service.

(Question 19 B) - Which Services Does R.P.L. Provide?

Part B of Question 19 concerned citizen awareness of which services are available at Racine Public Library. Respondents were asked to answer "yes" only to those items that they were certain that R.P.L. provided. Awareness of the full spectrum of library services is weak. Only 9 respondents were aware that all of the services mentioned in this section are available at the Racine Public Library. The services that respondents were least aware of were: lending of pamphlets, maps, etc. (c); lending of framed pictures (h); lending of special materials for the blind or handicapped (k); and lending of books or records in Spanish (l). More than 50% of those interviewed were not aware that these services could be obtained through the Racine Public Library. (The full chart of responses for Question 19 is available in the Appendix of this report.)

(Question 20) - Additional Services Requested by Respondents

Respondents to the survey were given a chance to offer spontaneous comments on services they would like the library to provide in addition to those mentioned in Question 19. 23 individuals had suggestions to make. None of these suggestions appeared frequently enough to be particularly significant. Ideas offered by more than one individual include the following:

Film projectors, film strip projectors, and tape recorders to borrow	(3)
More meeting space	(2)
More Sunday hours	(2)
Faster turn-over of books on Bookmobile	(2)
More emphasis on collection of overdue books and payment for unreturned books	(2)
Better parking	(2)
Appraisal service for art objects and antiques	(1)
More "bestsellers"	(1)

(One facetious gentleman even suggested that it would be helpful if R.P.L. would offer the service of lending money with a fine of 10¢ a day if repayment was overdue. In view of the current interest rates, this idea would be surefire for increasing circulation.)

CITIZEN AWARENESS AND USE OF RACINE PUBLIC LIBRARY FACILITIES
PILOT STUDY: DISTRICT 10-WARD 1, RACINE, WISCONSIN

SUMMARY REPORT

A study of the circulation patterns at the Uptown Branch revealed that only 8.9% of the Branch patronage came from the ward in which it is located. A door-to-door survey was planned to ascertain if this was a true reflection of the amount of use made of the library by residents of the ward.

The survey, concerning Citizen Awareness and Use of Racine Public Library Facilities, was conducted March 15-31, 1979 in District 10, Ward 1. The Branch is located in this ward. The purpose of the study was to discover the full extent of library use by area residents; to determine their awareness of library services available; and to form conclusions and recommendations based on this knowledge to help increase neighborhood use of the Branch Library.

25 questions were asked of residents from a random sample of 179 residences out of the total 1001 currently occupied personal dwellings in Ward 1. This constitutes 17.9% of the ward.

The make-up of the area population as revealed by survey results is an extremely stable population - over 86% had lived in Racine 10 years or more. 31% of the group was over 60 years of age and the area has a larger non-white population than the city as a whole--15.6% as compared to 11% city-wide. Approximately 50% of the adult population has at least a 12th grade education. 50% are not high school graduates, with a significant portion of this group having less than a 9th grade education.

Most of the survey respondents felt the Racine Public Library provided them with convenient facilities. Of those who use the library, one-half use Main, one-half patronize Uptown Branch. The greatest percentage of respondents felt they could reach the library they used in 15 minutes or less. Most felt nothing prevented them from using the library if they desired to do so.

Generally, residents were aware that they are entitled to a library card and use of library facilities. However there was a significant degree of confusion about the cost of a library card.

73% of those interviewed had used Racine Public Library facilities or services in some capacity in the preceding year. 65% of those surveyed use the library at least once a year. 35% use the library at least once a month.

The most frequently cited reasons for library use were to borrow materials; to ask information on a specific topic; and to use the copy machine. 52% of those who visited the library in the past year

came to check out materials. 48% visited the library for other reasons, (i.e. studying, programs, use copy machine, use meeting room, browse through newspapers and magazines, use microfilm reader, etc.)

The telephone information service was the single most popular service with this group. Almost 50% of the 179 respondents have or do make use of the telephone reference service provided by Racine Public Library.

44% of the survey respondents had Racine Public Library cards. 61% of the households involved in the survey had at least one member of the household who possessed an R.P.L. card.

Respondents were generally in agreement that the library should offer all the services mentioned in a list of possible library services on the questionnaire. The single exception was the lending of framed pictures. 57% of those responding to the survey did not favor this service.

Area residents were basically poorly informed about the full spectrum of services available at the Racine Public Library. Only 9 of the 179 were aware that all of the services mentioned in the questionnaire were available at R.P.L.. Over 50% of those surveyed were not aware that services for the blind and handicapped and Spanish materials were available through the Racine Public Library.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the survey was to determine citizen use and awareness of Racine Public Library facilities and to draw conclusions from the information received. Therefore, the issues of present levels of use and awareness will be discussed first. Possibilities for increasing use suggested by these findings will also be mentioned.

73% of the respondents made some use of library services in the past year but not necessarily in ways that are easily measured or quantifiable. A circulation count is not an adequate method for determining the number of people served and I assume that when the Public Library Association sets increased output to the public as the measure of library success[18], it intends the measurement of that success to be in the number of individuals served in the community.

52% of those who visited the library in the past year came to borrow materials. The remaining 48% came for other reasons. Present library methods for counting the number of patrons served (again, focusing on people, not materials) are rather inadequate to accurately reflect the library use of non-borrowers. One possibility to remedy this problem would be the installation of a turnstyle or electric-eye counting device at library entrances. It can be assumed that all individuals entering the library are there for some service offered by the library. This tally, along with a count of the number of individuals served through extension services, programs

and films, reference calls, etc. would be a more accurate measure of the number of individuals served in the community. This would not be able to measure the number of individuals served indirectly by the library, however, and the amount is considerable, I'm sure.

A count of library card holders is not an adequate method for reflecting citizen use of the library either. For example, in the area of the survey, only 44% of those questioned had library cards--compare this to the 73% of the respondents who had benefited from a library service in some capacity in the past year. Library use seems to be a family affair for many. A substantial number of the families interviewed had one member they considered their "library user". (61% of the families interviewed had at least one member with a Racine Public Library card.) This one card holder may check out materials for an entire family therefore serving a greater number of people than the one card holder.

(The above information leads me to a peripheral suggestion that the library register families as a group - issuing one number to a family, much like a credit card number. Registration for all family members would expire at the same time - no need for the patron to fill out a registration form for every family member individually - no need for the library to store separate registration for each individuals. Each member of the family would carry their own card but the number would be the same on each card. This would simplify the collection of fines, also. All fines would be filed with the same registration for each household.)

In summary to this section on library use by area residents, I would conclude that area library use is greater than reflected by the circulation study referred to in the Introduction and greater than that reflected by the number of card holders revealed by this study. The library must find ways to more accurately reflect the number of individuals served for when we talk about increasing neighborhood use of the Branch, I assume we are talking about increasing the number of individuals using the library, not the number of articles borrowed. This presents a real challenge to the library for once we start counting the number of individuals served, it behooves us to make sure our services are relevant to as large a group of these citizens as possible.

This survey reveals that there is certainly room for increasing the frequency of use of the library - only 35% of those surveyed use the library on a monthly basis. Also, some work must be done on expanding or broadening the type of use made of the library by some patrons. The copy machine is a valid library service but the library certainly has more to offer.

One possible way to broaden and increase the use of the library is to do some dynamic community advertising - not in-house advertising. Funds must be provided somehow to allow this type of library advocacy. A large percentage of survey respondents were not aware of many of the services offered by the Racine Public Library. Many were unsure about the cost of library services. The advertising should emphasize these two aspects - the right to "free" library service and the full spectrum

of services available at R.P.L.. We cannot assume that patrons with information needs will somehow wander in to the library. How many people felt an urgent need for a light bulb in the days when tallow candles lit our homes. Such a possibility was not even imagined by the majority of the population. However, when people became aware that such a thing had been invented, did indeed exist, it quickly became a "necessity" of modern life. The library has many services that can "turn on the lights" for Racine citizens.

In regard to increasing the use of the Uptown Branch, I have developed several conclusions and recommendations based on the circulation studies of the Branch and the information received from this survey. The Uptown Branch has ceased to function as a neighborhood branch library in the traditional sense. This is due in part to the fact that the Branch is situated so closely to the Main Library (1.5 miles separates the two via city streets). Approximately one-half of the library users in this Ward prefer to use the Main Library. The proximity of the Branch is not any longer a significant factor since most patrons use an automobile to get to the library they use. Most library users of this ward feel that the library they use is convenient and within 15 minutes of home - this includes the users of Main and Uptown.

In essence, the Branch is forced to compete with the Main, even in its own bailiwick. And it is forced to compete on a somewhat unequal footing. The Branch collection is smaller; no direct inter-library loan service is available; no films or tape cassettes can be borrowed from the Branch; and there is less

complete reference service available - limited by size of collection and staff.

The Branch, if it is to survive and increase in use, must be allowed to develop a distinctive personality of its own that is readily identified - above and beyond its friendly, individual service. It cannot compete when considered a "Mini-Main". (A "mini-Dolly Parton" would not be quite as attractive, would it?) The Branch should be allowed to develop a collection autonomously - not tied to the same criteria used to select for the Main. And a segment of this collection should be something distinctive and exclusively available at the Branch.

The Branch collection should continue to provide its fine popular fiction and selected non-fiction, but the special collection should be developed with the neighborhood make-up in mind. (To develop a more complete picture of the total Branch neighborhood a survey of District 3, Ward 2 should be conducted. Uptown is centered directly between District 10, Ward 1, and District 3, Ward 2.) The survey of District 10, Ward 1 has revealed a significant population of people over 60 years of age (31% of the adult population) —people living in their own homes, physically able, for the most part, to make "walk-in" or "drive-in" use of the Branch. The Community Analysis prepared by the Racine City Plan Commission and the conversation with Alderman Barry alluded to in the Introduction, both indicate that there is a significant population in the area with low income or on welfare. Both these groups have one characteristic in common - their lack of adequate income.

A special collection (only part of the total collection) that would make the Branch distinctive, serve the entire community, and be of particular service to the low-income or fixed-income clientele of the neighborhood would be a collection of up-to-date consumer education information.

Before you dismiss this suggestion by saying - "But who would come in to use it?" - please read further to see how the proper development and promotion of such a program would make it feasible and ensure a high probability of success. The collection developed would be broad in scope (consumer education can cover a wide range of topics); kept up-to-date and therefore more useful and relevant (out-of-date consumer information is a waste of shelf space); and developed in conjunction with a community consumer education program coordinated by the library. This would not be a sporadic, hit-and-miss program developed from a vacuum, but a well thought-out, continous program prepared in cooperation with area non-profit agencies that serve the elderly and disadvantaged in the community.

Funds for such a collection and consumer education program are available from the Office of Consumer Education, a division of the U.S. Office of Education. Libraries and other public non-profit agencies are among those eligible to apply for these funds offered under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Section 811. The purpose of this act is to support research and development and pilot projects designed to provide consumer education to the public. Funds are available for FY 1980 and applications

for grants under this program will be accepted in December, 1979.*

All of the elements for a successful program are present: 1) there is a neighborhood population with low or fixed income that needs this type of consumer education (people with few dollars must spend each one more carefully); 2) a program developed in cooperation with other community agencies would assure its relevance and an adequate use of the program - agencies would refer clients or members to library programs and materials; 3) and a possible source of funding is available.

This area of consumer education is of national interest to the library community. Ideas for such programs were solicited for presentation at the upcoming national American Library Association Convention in Dallas, Texas[19] and a tape presentation entitled Consumer Education Legislation and Public Libraries (Code No. ALA 78/45, 1 cassette) is available from the American Library Association.

* Per phone call to the U.S. Office of Consumer Education, 11:00 A.M., May 30, 1979. (Phone 1-202-653-5983).

APPENDIX

CITIZEN AWARENESS AND USE OF
RACINE PUBLIC LIBRARY FACILITIES

1. Does the Racine Public Library provide services at a location convenient to your home?

YES 159

NO 1

I don't know 19

2. Can you tell me the location of the Racine Public Library Branch or service that you use most often?

Main 68

Uptown 62

Bookmobile 19

Sr. Cit. Ctr. 2

YES 161

NO 18

(if yes) Specify _____

3. Do you find it possible to get to the library whenever you want to?

YES 150

NO 29

4. Why not? (Record answer verbatim)

_____

_____

Can't go during library hours 8

No transportation 10

Don't feel safe on the streets _____

Too far to walk _____

Physical disability 2

Small children keep me at home 1

No time 2

Other 6

(Parking problems were cited most frequently in the 'other' category)

5. How often do you use any of the Racine Public Library facilities?

once a week	21
one to 3 times a month	42
three to six times a year	32
once or twice a year	21
not at all (on to 8)	63

6. How do you usually get to the library?

bus	7
car	82
walk	27
bike	———
other	———

7. How long does it take you to get to the branch or service you use most often?

less than 5 mins.	16
5 to 15 mins.	93
16 to 30 mins.	6
more than 30 mins.	———
don't know	1

8. Do you ever use any other library than a Racine Public Library facility?

YES 42

NO 137 (on to 11)

9. (If yes) What other library do you use?

Public library in another city	2
School library	20
College library	19
Business or industry library	———
Other (church library specified)	1

10. Why do you use this library rather than the Racine Public Library? (Record answer)

(convenience of school and college libraries for students was most often cited answer)

Closer to work	———
Has materials not available at Racine Public Library	10
Other	32

11. Do you have a Racine Public Library library card?

YES 79

NO 100

12. Do any other people in your family have Racine Public Library cards?

Number 143

Age ____
____
____

13. Do you ever borrow materials for other people in your family at the library?

YES 37

NO 142

14. Does anyone ever borrow library materials for you to use?

YES 26

NO 153

15. What was the reason for your last trip to the Racine Public Library?

5 to attend a program

27 to ask information on a specific topic

15 to make copies

68 have not visited at all in the last year

1 to use meeting room

52 borrow materials for self

6 borrow materials for another member of family

4 to study

3 other - (Specify)
accompanied husband (1)

used microfilm reader (2)

16. Have you ever telephoned the library to get information on a problem or question?

YES 88

NO 91

17. Who may have a library card to use the Racine Public Library?

141 any resident of Racine County - regardless of age

2 property owners in the City of Racine

--- only adults 18 or older who live in the City

36 don't know

18. What is the cost of a library card?

$.50	11
no cost	87
$10.00	---
don't know	81

19. Out of the following list of possible services, which should a library provide? Which does the Racine Public Library provide?

	SHOULD	RPL DOES (figures below represent number of "yes" answers)
a. lending of books	178	167
b. lending of paperback books	158	111
c. lending of pamphlets, maps, etc.	154	88 *
d. provision of magazines and newspapers	164	129
e. lending of films	155	121
f. lending of records and cassettes	155	112
g. lending of children's reading material	177	156
h. lending of framed pictures	76 *	39 *
i. information service by telephone	175	140
j. provision of story hours and special programs for children	171	131
k. lending of special materials for the blind and handicapped	173	68 *
l. lending of books and records in Spanish	164	84 *
m. personalized help in answering questions on a specific topic	176	143

20. Are there any services not mentioned that you think your library should provide? (specify)

23 responses received

21. Age _____

22. Sex M 55 F 124

23. Race W 151 B 22 S 6

(A chart illustrating these characteristics is on page 19 of the body of the paper)

24. Highest grade completed in school: Elem. — 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8
H.S. — 9,10,11,12
College — 13,14,15,16
Grad.St.— 17+
No formal schooling — _____

41% had less than a high school education

57.5% high school graduates

25. How long have you lived in Racine?

_____ years

_____ months

161 respondents lived in Racine for 10 years or more

No one interviewed lived in Racine for less than 2 years

city of **RACINE**...racine, wisconsin
RACINE PUBLIC LIBRARY — Jack A. LeSuer, City Librarian

February 12, 1979

Dianne Bertelsen, graduate student in Library Science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, will be conducting a survey in the 10th District, 1st Ward to study citizen awareness and use of Racine Public Library facilities. This is being done with the permission of and in cooperation with the Racine Public Library.

Jack A. LeSuer
City Librarian

50

75 SEVENTH STREET, 53403 • 414-636-9241
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city of **RACINE**...racine, wisconsin

Office of Tenth Ward Alderman — Frank A. Barry

Dear Resident of the 10th District, 1st Ward:

In an effort to improve library service to our district, a door-to-door survey will be conducted concerning library use.

The survey will be taken by a graduate student of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, School of Library Science in cooperation with the Racine Public Library. It will be taken between March 15th and 31st.

Answers to the questions asked will help the library find ways to improve service to us all. The person taking the survey will be properly identified and registered with the Chamber of Commerce.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

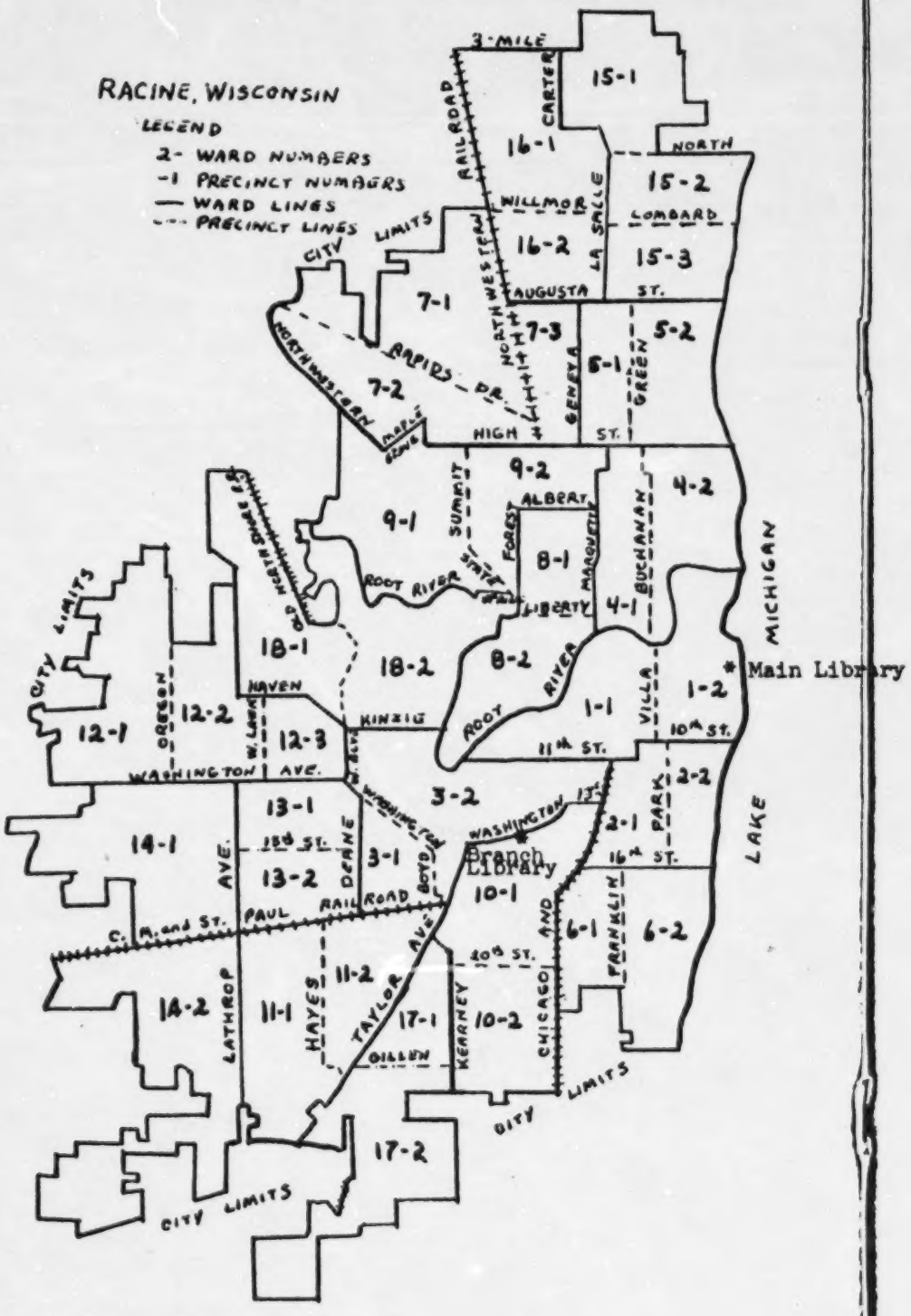
Frank A. Barry

Frank A. Barry, Alderman
District 10, Ward 1

2605 James Boulevard, 53403 Bus. 414 - 636-7840 Res. 414 - 633-6787

Source of Map of Wards:

League of Women Voters. Racine, The City and Its Government. Racine, Wisconsin: Unified School District No. 1, 1968.



40

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2. Ibid.

3. Racine Public Library, Hand in Hand 1897 - 1972, 75 Years of Community Service, (Racine, Wisconsin: Racine Public Library, (1972)).

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17. Racine City Plan Commission, op. cit., p.7.

18. Public Library Association, op. cit.

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